

Madam Speaker, there is an important element in this bill that I would like to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman Crane); to the gentleman from Texas (Chairman Archer); the gentleman from New York (Mr. Rangel), ranking member; the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Levin); and the staff on both sides of the aisle for dealing with something that actually would penalize good corporate environmental leadership on the part of American companies.

One of the reasons we have been interested in the opportunities for freer trade for American enterprise is an opportunity to extend American environmental standards and expertise around the world.

In my State of Oregon, we have a homegrown shoe company that is now the largest in the world, Nike. It is not just the largest shoe company in the world, but it has developed into a significant leader in environmental standards.

For example, in all the factories in which Nike does business around the world, they meet OSHA U.S. air quality standards. They also have developed a fascinating approach to recycling shoes. They call it Reuse a Shoe, where they recycle them instead of landfilling them.

But this company was faced with a bizarre and I think counterproductive interpretation by the U.S. Customs Service because they were going to be penalized for recycling the shoes and giving them away to charity as opposed to simply throwing them in the landfill.

The provisions of the U.S. Customs Law allows companies to get the Customs duty drawback if it is destroyed to the extent that the product has no commercial value. Unfortunately, the Customs Service interpreted that so narrowly that Nike would have been penalized for this Reuse a Shoe program where they grind it up, they make playgrounds for underserved inner-city youth.

In fact, the track at the White House is used of this recycled material.

I firmly believe that the Customs Service could and should have interpreted the provisions that the product has no commercial value to cover this, because clearly Nike was not

benefiting. In fact, it was costing them money to be a good environmental steward, but they thought it was the right thing to do.

I really appreciate the committee's placing a provision in this bill that made clear that a company that is a good environmental steward, that is recycling, is not going to be penalized. I would like to express my appreciation to the committee and the staff for making that adjustment.